Stress Management

Presented by
1st Infantry Division
Mental Health Section

What is Stress?

- Any demand (physical or mental) that is placed on your body.

True or False

- I would be better off if I got rid of all the stress in my life.

FALSE!!!

Stress vs. Distress

Stress	Distress
✔ Marriage	✔ Divorce
✔ Promotion	✔ Punishment
✔ Baby	✔ Injury
✔ Winning Money	✔ Negative feelings
✔ New Friends	✔ Financial Problems
✔ Graduation	✔ Work Difficulties

Phases of Stress

Alarm

Resistance

Burnout

Physical Reactions to Stress

- Nausea
- Upset stomach
- Heartburn
- Feeling uncoordinated
- Excess sweating
- Diarrhea/Constipation
- Dizziness
- Chest Pain
- Rapid heart beat
- Rapid breathing
- Increase blood pressure
- Headaches
- Muscle aches
- Sleep or appetite disturbance

Emotional Reactions to Stress

- Anxiety
- Fear
- Guilt
- Grief
- Depression
- Sadness
- Feeling lost
- Feeling abandoned
- Feeling isolated
- Anger
- Irritability
- Feeling numb
- Startled
- Wanting to limit contact with others
- Shocked

Burnout

- Ulcers
- Heart Attacks
- Strokes
- Clinical Depression
- Death

Optimal Stress Level

- The amount of stress you need in your life to keep you functioning without causing problems
- Different for everyone
- Must be known in order to manage stress effectively

Ways to Deal with Stress

- Exercise
- Nutrition
- Time management
- Change your behavior
- Change your environment
- Relaxation Techniques
- Social support (friends and family)

Exercise

- Aerobic exercise 3 to 5 times per week.
- Aerobic exercise include walking, running, bicycling, and swimming.
- Sustain the activity for a minimum of 20-30 minutes.
- Set small, attainable goals for yourself in exercise.

Nutrition

- Keep caffeine intake to a minimum.
- Eat fewer high-fat and high sugar foods.
- Moderate alcohol intake.
- Increase fiber, B complex vitamins, and vitamin C.

Time Management

- Get up when the alarm goes off
- Watch less TV
- Make a list of things to do each morning
- Prioritize daily activities
- Take a book or other reading materials when you know you have to wait.
- Learn to be assertive and to say NO to demands on your time.

Time Management (cont)

- Allow time for interruptions in your schedule.
- Schedule brief periods of quite time for yourself.
- Delegate
- Give yourself permission to engage in and enjoy leisure time.

Changing Your Behavior

- Often, our behavior contributes to the stress we are experiencing in our lives.
- Practice anger control
- Remember “The Golden Rule”
- Don’t dwell on the past, it can’t be changed. Work on the present and the future.

Changing Your Environment

- Not always possible in the military.
- Do what you can to eliminate stressors around you.
- Remember, sometimes accepting what you cannot change can relieve stress.

Relaxation Techniques

- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Deep Breathing Exercises
- Guided Imagery
- Meditation
- Biofeedback

Social Support

- Develop social support systems with friends and family.
- “Talking it out” relieves stress instantly.
- Utilize resources for support such as the Chaplain and other counseling agencies like Division Mental Health.

Principles of Stress

- Stress is inescapable-stress is continuous, only the levels change.
- Comfort zones exist
- Stress is not inherently negative
- Individual differences exist in reaction to stressors.

Stress Can Be Managed!!!